

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 USIA-15 /034 W
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R 281455Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6193
INFO USDOC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 2090

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP EAGR TS
SUBJECT: AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY CATALOGUE SHOW:
TUNIS FINAL REPORT

1. SUMMARY. SUBJECT SHOW WELL ATTENDED BY ALL SEGMENTS OF TARGET AUDIENCE EXCEPT AGENTS/DISTRIBUTORS, DESPITE SPECIAL APPROACH TO LATTER GROUP BY E/C OFFICERS. DIFFICULTIES PRESENTED BY LANGUAGE (CATALOGUES IN ENGLISH, ATTENDEES FRENCHLSPEAKING) SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED IMPACT OF SHOW AS DIRECT SALES PROMOTION DEVICE, ALTHOUGH IT PROVIDEDUSEFUL EXPOSURE FOR U.S. AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY AND MACHINERY. INDUSTRY EXPERT HAROLD HALTER MADE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SHOW. END SUMMARY.

2. CATALOGUE SHOW OPENED FEB 22 IN EXPOSITION HALL OF USIS CULTURAL CENTER IN DOWNTOWN TUNIS. SHOW HAD BEEN PROMOTED BY LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR TO OVER 600 AGENTS, GOV'T OFFICIALS, AND FARMERS AND BY NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING THE WEEKEND BEFORE SHOW AND ON OPENING DAY. AFTER SLOW START, TRAFFIC PICKED UP FIRST AFTERNOON AND AVERAGED ABOUT TWENTY PEOPLE PER SESSION THEREAFTER. EXPOSITION OPEN 9 AM TO NOON AND 3 PM TO 6 PM FOR FOUR DAYS, CLOSING FEB 25. 152 U.S. COMPANIES SUPPLIED
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CATALOGUES FOR SHOW; CATALOGUES FROM 5 COMPANIES ARRIVED AFTER SHOW HAD CLOSED AND WERE NOT DISPLAYED. EXPOSITION WAS STAFFED FULL-TIME BY A CONTRACT LIBRARIAN/RECEPTIONIST, EMBASSY SENIOR COMMERICAL SPECIALIST AND INDUSTRY-EXPERT HAROLD HALTER. EMBASSY COMMERICAL LIBRARIAN AND E/C OFFICERS ALSO ASSISTED AS NEEDED. IT WAS GENERALLY AGREED THAT ATTENDANCE WAS AS HEAVY AS COULD BE EFFICIENTLY HANDLED BY STAFF, GIVEN LANGUAGE SER-

VICES NEEDED TO WORK WITH CATALOGUES NOT IN COMMERICAL LANGUAGE OF COUNTRY (FRENCH) AND TO ASSIST INDUSTRY EXPERT. TOTAL OF 89 ATTENDEES REGISTERED OF ESTIMATED TOTAL ATTENDANCE OF 110-120. THERE WERE OVER 900 REQUESTS FOR CATALOGUES, AND ALL FIRMS BUT ONE RECEIVED TRADE INQUIRIES.

3. BREAKDOWN ON ATTENDANCE AS FOLLOWS: AGENTS 16, FARMERS - 19, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS - 27, OTHER - 27. EMBASSY WAS PLEASED WITH LEVEL OF ATTENDEES AND BELIEVES THAT KEY INDIVIDUALS FROM ALL AREAS OF AG SECTOR VISITED THE SHOW. ATTENDANCE BY AGENTS/ DISTRIBUTORS WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING DESPITE INDIVIDUAL PRE-SHOW CONTACTS BY E/C STAFF.

4. DELEGATION FROM THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, HEADED BY MALEK BEN SALAH, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION, VISITED SHOW ON FRIDAY MORNING FEB. 25; AMBASSATMR VISITED LATER IN DAY. SCHEDULED JOINT VISIT THURSDAY BY AMBASSADOR AND MOHAMED GHEDIRA, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION, UNFORTUNATELY WAS CANCELLED DUE TO CLOSING OF CULTURAL CENTER THAT AFTERNOON FOLLOWING UNRULY STUDENT DEMONSTRATION IN DOWNTOWN TUNIS. (FYI: THIS IS EXTREMELY RARE OCCURENCE IN TUNIS AND WAS IN NO WAY AIMED AT EXPOSITION.) GHEDIRA VISIT, HAD IT OCCURRED, WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN TUNISIAN PRESS, RADIO, AND TELEVISION, ALAS*

5. INSTEAD OF INAUGURAL RECEPTION FOR SHOW, WHICH NOT ALWAYS EFFECTIVE MEDIUM IN TUNIS, COMMERICAL OFFICER GAVE SMALL DINNER FOR KEY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONTACTS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR TO DISCUSS U.S. MACHINERY WITH MR. HALTER AND JEROME KUHLE, UNCLASSIFIED

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AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE ACCREDITED TO TUNIS.

6. PHYSICAL SET-UP OF THE SHOW CLOSELY RESUMBLERED LAYOUT DESCRIBED IN 72 A-9166. LAST MINUTE DIFFICULTIES IN USING USIS EXHIBIT SYSTEM WERE OVERCOME BY EXCELLENT SHELF SYSTEM CONSTRUCTED IN 48 HOURS BY EMBASSY CARPENTER. SOME BUDGET REALLOCATIONS WERE ALSO NECESSARY. LATE AUTHORIZATION OF BUDGET PREVENTED HIRING LIBRARIAN/RECEPTIONIST UNTIL THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO SHOW. NECESSARY SORTING AND CATALOGUING WERE COMPLETED IN TIME. BROCHURE COULD NOT BE PRINTED IN TIME FOR DISTRIBUTION PRIOR TO THE SHOW, BUT USIS PRODUCED AN EXCELLENT BROCHURE WHICH WAS EFFECTIVELY USED DURING THE SHOW AS GUIDE TO CATALOGUES EXHIBITED.

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7. INDUSTRY EXPERT HALTER WAS A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN SUCCESS OF THIS EXPOSITION. BEYOND HIS UNUSUALLY BROAD ACQUAINTANCE WITH EQUIPMENT AND COMPANIES DISPLAYED, HALTER'S WARM OUTGOING PERSONALITY WAS WELL RECEIVED BY TUNISIAN ATTENDEES. HIS LACK OF FRENCH WAS AN IMPEDIMENT TO DIRECT CONTACT, AND REQUIRED EXTRA STAFF FOR INTERPRETING, BUT DID NOT SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE HIS FAVORABLE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL IMPACT. INDUSTRY-WIDE ILLUSTRATED DIRECTORIES BROUGHT BY HALTER WERE VALUABLE IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT PRODUCT LINES OR COMPANIES NOT REPRESENTED. HALTER ALSO BROUGHT WITH HIM LARGE SELECTION OF IMPRESSIVE SLIDES WHICH ENABLED USIS TO MOUNT ATTENTION-GRABBING CONTINUOUS SLIDE SHOW THROUGHOUT THE EXPOSITION.

8. COMMENTS. THIS POST FEELS THAT POTENTIAL IMPACT OF CATALOGUE SHOW WAS GREATLY DIMINISHED BY LANGUAGE PROBLEM. BASICALLY CATALOGUE SHOW DEPENDS ON VISITORS' ABILITY TO CONSULT AND UNDERSTAND PRINTED MATERIAL AND MAKE INTELLIGENT JUDGMENTS ABOUT EQUIPMENT OFFERED BY EACH COMPANY. NINETY-FIVE PERCENT OF VISITORS DID NOT SPEAK OR UNDERSTAND ENGLISH. COMMUNICATION WAS THEREFORE DIFFICULT. WE BELIEVE SHOW WAS SUCCESSFUL IN DISPLAYING U.S. TECHNOLOGY IF ONLY THROUGH PICTURES - BUT REGRETFULLY PREDICT THAT DIRECT COMMERCIAL RESULTS WILL BE SPARSE. ADDED TO LANGUAGE PROBLEM IS FACT THAT CATALOGUE
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SHOW ATTRACTED LARGE NUMBER OF END-USERS OF PRODUCT LINES DISPLAYED; WHEREAS MOST OF PARTICIPATING COMPANIES WERE LOOKING FOR AGENTS, NOT ONE-TIME SALES. WE BELIEVE CATALOGUE SHOWS A FEW USEFUL EXPOSURE TECHNIQUES, PARTICULARLY WHEN USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH LARGER SHOWS SUCH AS TRADE FAIR. HOWEVER, UNDER

LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVE CATALOGUE SHOW IS NOT PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE PROMOTIONAL DEVICE FOR TUNISIA.

9. SHOW SUPPORT MATERIALS AND FINAL BUDGET BEING POUCHED.
LETTERS THANKWNG TUNISIAN VISITORS FOR ATTENDING EXHIBIT
AND REPORTS TO PARTICIPATING U.S. FIRMS ALONG WITH FULL LIST OF
VISITORS HAVE BEEN SENT.
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Message Attributes

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